

25 April 1956

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

**SUBJECT: Some NIS Considerations stemming from recent
BGN Name Policies**

1. Recent discussions by the Foreign Names Committee and BGN regarding German names in the Polish area east of the Oder-Neisse Line give weight to maintaining a more stable policy respecting foreign geographic names. The final action by the Foreign Names Committee which leaves unresolved any change of policy is favorable to the NIS Gazetteer program in this area. Eventually reconsideration of the present policy will be in order either when NATO supports a Polish base for these names under the Stanag paper or at such time as a revision of the NIS Gazetteer on Poland is undertaken.

2. Another matter which has been under discussion is the Arabic name base for the Middle Eastern countries. The military position, particularly that of Army, is that a greater depth of geographic name research is necessary to satisfy the larger scale maps for these areas. That is a practical point of view and one which we should attempt to harmonize with the NIS Gazetteer work by a) encouraging more rapid development of Arabic base names, b) requiring a much greater depth of name research for an area before revising an NIS Gazetteer, and c) through more publicity with regard to published Gazetteers on these areas in the form of making copies available to the right people in the area concerned. Our best support in the long run will be the official use by these governments of such name bases. I want to discuss with Dr. Burrill ways and means in which we can further these ends.

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3. Another related problem is areas where the NIS Gazetteer program is divergent from the BGN name policy philosophy. The assignment [REDACTED] as advisory CIA member on the board of the Board on Geographic Names and the Foreign Names Committee of BGN should greatly improve this situation. It is my intention to impress the other members on these committees with a need of maintaining a relatively stable situation in the broad name policy field in order not to invalidate major developments of geographic names undertaken within the NIS Program.

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Distribution:

- 1 - BGN file
- 1 - Gazetteer file

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